

RECOGNIZING THE VILLAGE OF HOMER GLEN FOR BEING NAMED AN INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY COMMUNITY

### HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 10, 2012*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Village of Homer Glen, which will be recognized this evening as only the fourth International Dark Sky Community in the world. At the Homer Glen Village Hall in the Council Chambers, Mr. Bob Parks, Executive Director of the International Dark Sky Association, will present the village with the award. Homer Glen's commitment to recognizing the beauty of the night sky as well as saving energy has been recognized internationally and I am very proud of their accomplishment. In particular, Village Trustee, Margaret Sabo has been a stalwart supporter of this initiative, and she deserves special acknowledgment.

In 2007, Homer Glen passed the first city ordinance of its kind in Illinois. By setting guidelines for the amount of light commercial business can emit, the village eliminated the need for establishments to escalate the brightness of their signs to garner attention. The ordinance also included a lighting cutoff at night, which reduces glare for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists, and protects the natural cycle of night and day for local wildlife. I also want to recognize several establishments in Homer Glen that responded to the ordinance with effective and responsible lighting plans: Eagle Rock Community Church, Firestone Complete Auto Care, Silver Cross Health Center, and Midland Federal Savings and Loan. All of the organizations will be recognized at the event tonight as well as Debra Briggs Luginbuhl who has been a leader in developing the ordinance.

While saving energy, the city ordinance has also allowed for local residents to view the breathtaking beauty of our night sky, something so many Americans cannot do or take for granted. Every summer, local organizations hold a stargazing event at Trantina Farm, where thousands of local residents can clearly view constellations including Bootes, Hercules, the Corona Borealis, and much more. This year, the event will be this Friday, July 13th. Over 1000 stargazers have attended since the beginning of the event, and local amateur astronomers from Kankakee Area StarGazers, the Naperville Astronomical Association, and the South West Astronomy Observers Group come to help others recognize the various celestial bodies.

I commend Homer Glen for joining Flagstaff, Arizona, Borrego Springs, California, and Sark Island in the English Channel as an International Dark Sky Community. The residents of this village have shown initiative and leadership in appreciating our night sky and I hope others will follow.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL ROBERT D. PETERSON

### HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 10, 2012*

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Colonel Robert D. Peterson; who has served West Virginia through his leadership for the past 3 years at the United State Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District. Col. Peterson is responsible for the 300 navigable miles of the Ohio River basin. Col. Peterson employees over 800 staff members to maintain 35 reservoirs, and nine locks and dams. I want to personally congratulate Col. Peterson for his continued success.

The awards of Col. Peterson are just a fraction of what he has truly accomplished. Col. Peterson has successfully managed 35 flood projects that prevented over 11.3 billion dollars in damages while allowing over 30 million visitors to support these regions through tourism. He was responsible for the processing of 94 tons of commercial traffic valued at \$18.6 billion dollars through nine locks and dams. He oversaw the ongoing construction of the Bluestone Dam including communication of risk in the event of dam failure and held a Combined Emergency Exercise to educate affected federal, state and local governments to potential dangers. As a result, the Huntington District was selected by the Great Lakes and Ohio River division as the Regional Dam Safety Production Center and soon after, selected by the Corps of Engineers Headquarters as the Corps' national Mandatory Center of Expertise for Dam Safety.

I had the honor to work with Col. Peterson as he executed nine Project Partnership Agreements for environmental infrastructure projects providing water and sewer service to unserved and underserved residents of the Second Congressional District, resulting in improved public health and safety. He has proven to be an effective communicator in a variety of public venues on the federal, state and local level, including such forums as the Ohio River Basin Alliance of which I have been involved. And lastly, he issued 800 permits for mining, highway construction, and flood emergency, including the permit to place West Virginia's newest resident, the Boy Scout Jamboree on a post-mining land site within our beautiful state of West Virginia.

Col. Robert D. Peterson is an outstanding soldier, friend, husband and father. He is a 1985 graduate from the prestigious academy of West Point, graduating with a Bachelors of Science and from the U.S. Army War College with a Masters Degree in Strategic Studies. Col. Peterson was awarded the Bronze Star, three Army Commendation Medals, two Army Achievement Medals, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Master Parachutist Badge, and the Bronze Order of the deFleury Medal.

Col. Peterson's work has greatly enhanced the state of West Virginia and the world around him. Congratulations to Col. Peterson on his numerous accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 2012 WASHINGTON, DC FALUN Dafa EXPERIENCE SHARING CONFERENCE

### HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 10, 2012*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome participants of the 2012 Washington, DC Falun Dafa Experience Sharing Conference and Rally.

I share Falun Gong's commitment to freedom of expression and peaceful demonstration. As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, every person has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, and we must do all that we can to ensure that citizens here in America and around the world have access to these fundamental rights.

Since Falun Gong's inception in 1992, it is estimated that millions of individuals have been drawn to its guiding principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. These principles are enduring cornerstones of a democratic society. Yet, as we mark over 60 years since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is a travesty that those who hold Falun Gong beliefs have been persecuted and tortured. I look forward to the day when Falun Gong practitioners can freely express their beliefs without fear of reprisal.

Mr. Speaker, peace and justice are not only values but calls to action that we must live out every day. I will continue to act here in Congress to promote peace for all persecuted communities and work for a more just world.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL FREDERICK "BEN" HODGES' SERVICE TO OUR NATION

### HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 10, 2012*

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Major General Frederick "Ben" Hodges, United States Army, for his extraordinary dedication to duty and selfless service to the United States of America. Major General Hodges will be moving on from his present assignment as the Chief, Office Congressional Legislative Liaison (OCLL) for the United States Army to become the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Land Command, Chief.

A native Floridian from Quincy, Major General Ben Hodges graduated from the United States Military Academy in May 1980 and was commissioned as an Infantry Officer. After his first assignment as an Infantry Lieutenant in Germany, he commanded Infantry units at the Company, Battalion and Brigade levels with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and in combat during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. His most recent operational combat assignment was as the Director of Operations, Regional Command South, in Kandahar, Afghanistan during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

Major General Hodges has served in a variety of Joint and Army Staff positions to include Tactics Instructor at the Infantry School; Chief